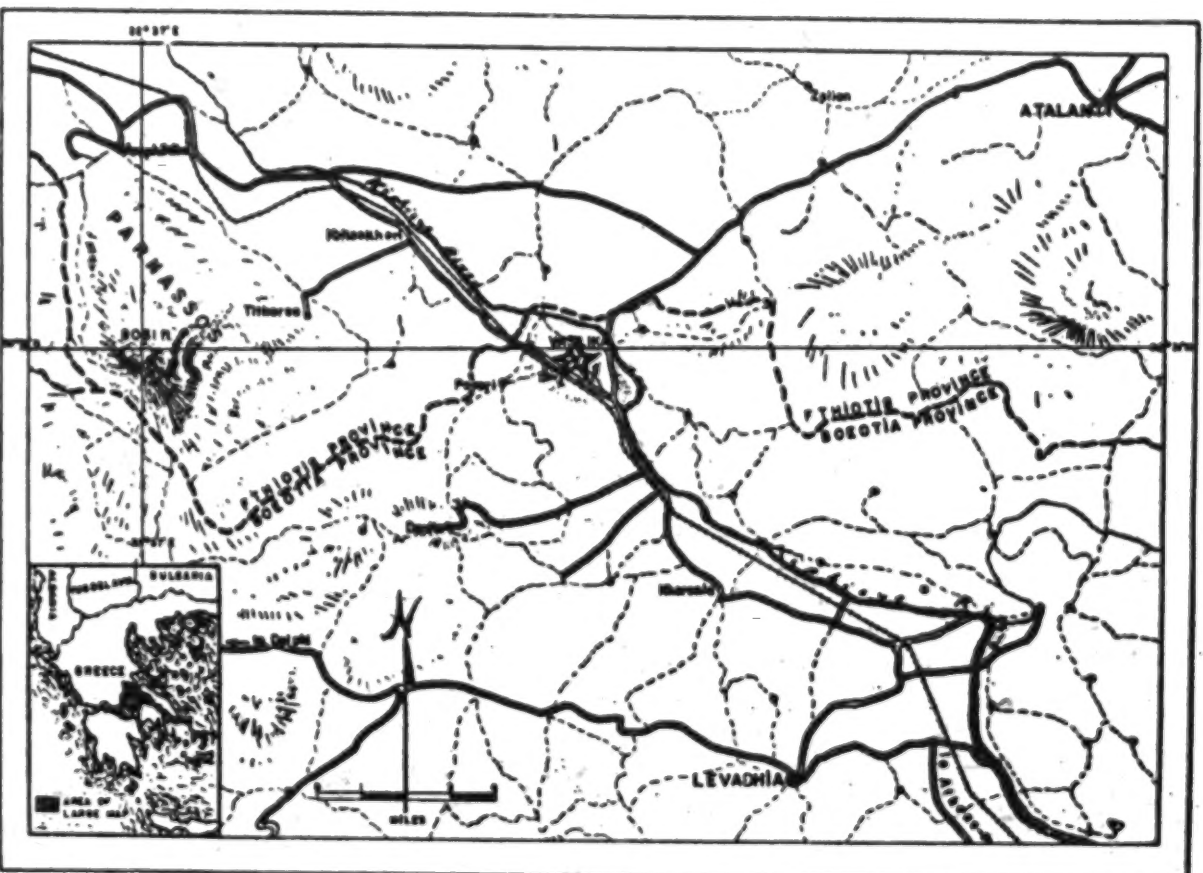


2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 943 EH1 Greece EH1
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102
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The nearest railroad station is 3 kilometers from the village. The area is rather flat, sloping gradually as we progress towards the North East. The whole valley where the village lies is surrounded by small rolling hills that form numerous deep gulleys. Due to the lack of vegetation on those hills erosion has been going on for years and very often the fields are flooded down into the valley. The unceasing wars in this area, starting with the Balkan wars and ending with the First World /6/ War, stripped the hills of all trees and shrubs that could protect the soil and prevent the floods. One finds numerous dry fountain springs at the foot of the hills which were built by the people who passed on long ago. With the disappearance of the vegetation on the hills the water disappeared too. There is a small brook that runs North East of the village which quenches the thirst of the village cattle and the numerous flocks of sheep, and serves as a bathing place for the water buffaloes.

The flat land forms an alluvial valley, which has been formed from the deposition of soil by the continuous erosion of the nearby hills. The average elevation from the sea level is 90 meters. In general the soils of the area are 40% sandy clay red soils and 60% clay pyritic. These soils are made up from the surrounding rock formations. In general the depth of the cultivated soil is not more than 25 centimeters and very compact. The sub-soil is sandy clay and does not conserve the moisture. The fertility of these soils is depleted due to continuous farming for many centuries of the organic material and nitrogen.

The climate is very dry and hot in the summer months with plenty of rain during the winter months and occasionally snow. The seasons of the year follow each other /7/ abruptly and not uniformly. This of course has harmful effects on the growth and germination of the plants and hinders the diversification of farming.

The railroad station close to the village enables the village to get to the big trading city of Salonica. This good location

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Vacation and Travel. There is no accepted idea of vacation. Vacation is only for the school children but during the end of harvest season when the farmer /41/ has money he takes his family to the city or to the international fair of Salonica. The men at such leisure times spend their weekends with their friends and relatives in remote villages. The cost of travel makes it hard for most, but their beast of burden, the donkey, serves as a means for this purpose. There is no one in the village who has not traveled in the two continents of Europe and Asia. Some of them have been to Germany, Hungary, Austria, Russia, and Turkey as prisoners in the First War. Some others due to deportation from one country to another, had an unbearable type of travelling. The Government railroads during holidays and early in the fall reduce the cost of train tickets by 50% and thus make it easier for many to travel.

One of the average farmers, with a family of four, spent for the year Drs. 1211 (\$7.50) for travel. This sum covers 800 kilometers. The above shows the extensive travelling the men do mostly for business. It is during this travelling period that the farmer brings in and takes out from his village new seeds, new improved methods of cultivation and new customs and forms of community interests.

Protection of Health and Care of the Aged. If there is anything which is neglected in Megali Vrasi it is the /42/ health of the people. In spite of the medical center and the Near East Foundation Children's Nursery Center, where a health project was started, the extent of malaria, tuberculosis, pneumonia and intestinal diseases was just as great as before these agents came in. In fact in one of my surveys with which I tried to find out the death rate of young children from 3 months to 4 years old, four years before the Near East Foundation established itself and five years after its work, the figures of death rate to my surprise were amazingly larger than before, in spite of the Near East Foundation's efforts. After my eight years of experience with the farmers I was convinced of the inadequacy of the existing health program which was

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